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INFO RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 5222
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 5261
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 4851
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 5028
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JAN RIO DE JANEIRO 1820
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 2711
RUEHMI/USOFFICE FRC FT LAUDERDALE 0899
RUEHMI/DELTACO MSGBN FT LAUDERDALE

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000109

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR DS/DSS, DS/DSS/IP, DS/IP/WHA, DS/IP/SPC,
DS/IP/OPO, DS/IP/ITA, DS/DSS/OSAC, DS/T/ATA,
DS/ICI/CR, DS/CIS/PSP, DS/PSP/PSD, DS/CIS/IST, DS/EX,
WHA/EX
POSTS FOR RSO
FT LAUDERDALE FOR CO/COMPANY D AND OIC/ESC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT - BUENOS AIRES:
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 2005, ACEQ, and OSAC
CRIME/SAFETY REPORT

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

[1](#)A. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES:

[1](#)1. SECURITY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS:

Security Upgrade Project XJ-01-8941 (210 meter anti-ram/anti-climb wall, 140+ FEBR windows, new Consular hardline, new consular fire exit, 60 minute generator room, miscellaneous grillwork): Accepted by OBO on December 8, 2005. Incorrect fire exit door and a window and door lock damaged in shipment will be replaced by contractor in mid-2006.

FE/BR Upgrade Project: KUK-Brown and Root Services have installed framework and some FE/BR material to replace Consular and Auditorium front entrances and a window over Post 1.

[1](#)2. SUPPORT FOR VIP VISITS:

SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS (POTUS/SECSTATE) Nov 4-5, 2005:
RSO and FSNI traveled to Mar del Plata October 19 - November 6 to coordinate Summit security.

In Buenos Aires, RSO provided security support for the visit of U.S. Army Chief of Staff Schoomaker and Secretary of Commerce Gutierrez, from Oct 30 - Nov 4,

SIPDIS

[1](#)2005.

Governor of Colorado - Nov 13-15, 2005

[1](#)3. SIGNIFICANT LIAISON:

OSAC/AmCham security committee met on the first Tuesday of October and November at Embassy Buenos

Aires. In December RSO hosted the annual lunch for OSAC/AmCham members at the American Club.

RSO met regularly with Ministry of Interior, Federal, Provincial, and paramilitary police officials, and airport authority.

14. TIME CONSUMING INVESTIGATIONS:

RSO Buenos Aires and Post ISSO investigated three leads sent by DS CIRT:

CIRT lead # 521: RSO and ISSO collected evidence and forwarded the case to DS CIRT for further investigation. DS/PR responded and has requested RSO to interview Subject of A/M lead.

CIRT lead received November 2, 2005 (No case # provided): CIRT indicated a user was using unauthorized software on their machine. CIRT lead stated (7090), UPX_PACKED_EXECUTABLE, Buenos Aires, CR. RSO and ISSO scanned user's account with negative results. The user was counseled regarding the Department's acceptable use policy, per 12 FAM 623.1-1,2 .

CIRT lead (No case # provided) received on December 20, 2005: CIRT indicated a user was using unauthorized software on their machine. CIRT lead stated (7543) UPX_Packed_Executable. RSO and ISSO scanned user's machine and account with negative results. RSO did determine user attempted to download software. The user has been counseled on the proper use of Department equipment, per 12 FAM 623.1,2 and statement was forwarded to Buenos Aires HR for action as per 12

FAM 590.

RSO Buenos Aires assisted DS/NYFO with a lead request for Subject PEIRANO, Basso. Dec 6, 2005.

15. NON-ROUTINE OFFICIAL, BUSINESS, OR OTHER VISITORS:

RSO met with security and other officials from the following organizations: US Secret Service, Air Force OSI, Army CID, USCG, ICE, Israeli Embassy, Lincoln School, Sheraton Hotels, CNI Insurance, Rockwell Controls, and IBM.

RSO supported the following visits:

- ESC Montevideo: Oct 14-21, Dec 4-8, Dec 20-21
- US Secret Service: Oct 10 - 14, Oct 23 - Nov 7
- OBO: Nov 22-30, Dec 4-10
- DS Global ID: Nov 9-18

16. OTHER ACTIVITIES:

New Arrival Security Briefing every Tuesday

RSO FSN weekly staff meeting every Wednesday

RSO Annual Leave: Nov 24-27, Dec 21-Jan 8

ARSO Annual Leave: Oct 6, Oct 11, Nov 28-Dec 2

ARSO TDY to Asuncion - Dec 8-18

Floor Warden Training - Nov 15, 2005

All emergency procedures updated and issued under Ambassador's signature in accordance with the Mollen ARB and 05 STATE 169851

Arranged for 10 Argentine police representatives to attend ATA 5620 in Jan 2006 at ILEA Lima

Marine Ball Nov 12

Lincoln School International Day Nov 19

Global ID implemented, 550 badges issued, Nov 14-18

Site survey and collocation waiver request for Treasury OTA office

EAP annual update

EAC meetings:

Oct 27 - Human Rights Abuse Allegations and Summit of the Americas (05 BA 2738)

Oct 6 - Jeddah Lessons Learned and Marine Ball (05 BA 2610)

17. SIGNIFICANT TRAINING OR LIAISON PERTAINING TO PASSPORT OR VISA FRAUD: N/A

1B. MISSION WIDE EMERGENCY ACTION DRILLS:

1. CHANCERY

Fire - Dec 23

Bomb - Oct 26, (actual), Oct 4 actual),

Emergency Destruct - Mar 31, 2005

Internal Defense - Nov 4 (actual), Oct 28 (actual),

Oct 12 (actual), Oct 1 (actual)

Duck and Cover - Nov 22, 2005

Warden System - Feb 11, 2005

2. OTHER THAN CHANCERY: None

1C. CONSTITUENT POSTS: None

1D. MSG ACTIVITIES:

1. DATE/TYPE OF DRILLS:

Oct 4 Bomb Threat (actual)

Oct 4 Internal Defense (actual)

Oct 12 Internal Defense (actual)

Oct 20 Internal Defense (drill)

Oct 28 Internal Defense (actual)

Nov 4 Internal Defense (actual)

Nov 23 Intruder (drill)

Nov 30 Orientation (drill)

Dec 13 Duck/Cover (drill)

Dec 23 Fire (drill)

2. GUARD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: Weekly

3. VISITS OF HQ/COMPANY PERSONNEL:

Oct 24-29 Co D Capt O'Reilly

Nov 11-14 Co D Capt O'Reilly

4. TDY REQUESTS:

Oct 19-Nov 7 SSgt Root TDY to Mar del Plata

Nov 17-19 Sgt Vogeles and Cpl Gehrke TDY to Montevideo, Uruguay.

Nov 20 Sgt Calcagni departs Buenos Aires to Quantico to check out of the Marine Corps

Nov 25-27 Cpl Doan and Cpl Levine TDY to Santiago, Chile

12. (U) THREATS AND INCIDENTS:

11. BUENOS AIRES

1A. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: (activity taking place in or within 1 mile of Mission neighborhoods)

CITY OF BUENOS AIRES (Chancery/EMR/apartments located in Recoleta/Palermo/Belgrano neighborhoods):

Oct 01, 2005, Larrea 1345, Recoleta: 2 suspects were detained after attempting to rob a store in the area.

Oct 05, 2005: A man and woman were arrested in San Nicolas, Buenos Aires Province, suspected of stealing ATM cards in the BA neighborhoods of Belgrano and Villa Urquiza by affixing a device to ATM machines.

Oct 5, 2005, Nicaragua 4940, Palermo: 5 assailants invaded an apartment and robbed the occupants. The assailants used walkie talkies to communicate with a lookout. No suspects have been detained.

Oct 06, 2005, 1430 hrs, Av. Cabildo al 500, Belgrano: 3 men were arrested with a 9mm pistol when they

attempted to rob a Bank Boston customer exiting the bank.

Oct 13, 2005, 100 hrs, Juncal 3052, Recoleta: 3 armed minors robbed a caf and escaped with money from the register. No suspects were apprehended.

Oct 18, 2005, Honduras 4160, Palermo: 2 juveniles were robbed in their apartment. No arrests.

Oct 21, 2005: Santa Fe 3996, Palermo. A robber pretending to make a delivery invaded and robbed an apartment. The victim subsequently escaped and made his way to the police station. No arrest.

Oct 26, 2005, 2100 hrs, Jorge Luis Borges 2126, Palermo: Guests at a birthday party were robbed by 3 armed men who escaped with money, cell phones, and a vehicle.

Oct 29, 2005, Libertad 1000, Recoleta: A 25 year old Slovenian was arrested for using fake credit cards to purchase high value items, including jewelry and artwork.

Nov 01, 2005, Lafinur 3020, Palermo: 2 students were locked in a room while their apartment was robbed. There were no signs of forced entry and police believe that the perpetrators had keys to the apartment. No arrests.

Nov 04, 2005, Gorriti 5032, Palermo: A store owner was shot in the head and chest when he confronted 4 robbers trying to enter his business. 2 suspects were arrested after a vehicle pursuit. Police also seized several fake license plates.

Nov 08, 2005, Fitzroy 2400, Palermo: 2 armed men robbed a real-estate office. No arrests.

Nov 09, 2005, Cabildo 2215, Palermo: A minor attempted to rob a line of ATM patrons at a local bank. When confronted, he fled with money from an elderly woman. No arrest.

Nov 16, 2005, an FSN's son received a virtual kidnapping phone call. The son hung up and turned off

the phone.

Nov 24, 2005, Republica Arabe Siria 3330, Palermo: 3 suspects attempted to rob a local restaurant but were surprised by police already inside the establishment. One suspect was shot in the head and the others escaped.

Nov 24, 2005, 0100, Uruguay 1037, Recoleta: 4 suspects robbed an accounting office, taking documents, but leaving behind money and jewels. No arrests.

Dec 07, 2005, Soler 5101, Palermo: 3 armed men robbed the cashier and customers at a caf. No arrests.

Dec 07, 2005, 0620 hrs, Migueletes 2251, Belgrano: 3 home invaders, pretending to be police officers, beat two elderly victims. A neighbor called police who arrested the perpetrators.

Dec 14, 2005, 0430 hrs, Cuba and Monroe Street, Belgrano: Police surprised 2 suspects stealing a vehicle. One suspect was arrested after a pursuit which ended with the crash of the stolen vehicle.

Dec 15, 2005, 1530 hrs, 1700 Cabildo, Belgrano: A

woman notified police of a suspicious person sitting in a vehicle in front of her business. When police approached, the person began shooting, injuring an officer and 3 pedestrians. The suspect escaped.

Dec 16, 2005, Las Caitas, Palermo: 2 gunmen robbed a supermarket and escaped on a motorcycle. No arrests.

Dec 17, 2005, an Amcit reported being robbed and having her passport stolen near a hostel in Recoleta.

Dec 18, 2005, Olleros 2551, Palermo: 3 robbers unsuccessfully attempted to steal a computer from a local business and fled in a company truck. The truck was found abandoned several blocks from the scene and there were no arrests.

Dec 21, 2005, Olazabal 3169, Belgrano: An 80 year old woman was found stabbed to death in her bathtub. No arrests.

Dec 25, 2005, 1200 hrs, Emilio Ravignani 2200, Palermo: 2 armed men were arrested attempting to rob a home.

Dec. 27, 2005, Cervino y Salguero, Palermo: Police arrested a man, after an exchange of gunfire, when he attempted to flee the pharmacy he robbed on a bicycle.

Dec 28, 2005, Amenabar 2700, Belgrano: A retired police officer was killed and his co-worker injured resisting a robbery. The two suspects escaped.

Dec. 28, 2005, Rosedal, Palermo: 3 armed men attempted to mug an American tourist. The tourist grabbed one of the muggers and used him as a shield. The other 2 suspects fled but were arrested by police.

Dec 29, 2005, Santa Fe y Malabia, Palermo: A 17 year old man attempted to rob and rape a woman waiting at a bus stop. The victim resisted and the man fled with her purse, but was arrested a few blocks away.

PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES (Houses/schools located in Vicente Lopez (Olivos/La Lucila) and San Isidro (Martinez/Acassuso) Municipalities)

Oct 04, 2005, Beccar, San Isidro, PBA: 2 teenagers kidnapped a 15-year-old boy at knifepoint. The boy

was raped and subsequently released for a ransom of US\$200, a TV and a VCR. 2 suspects were arrested.

Oct 08, 2005, Ricardo Gutierrez 1800, Martinez, PBA: A homeowner exiting his garage was surprised by 4 home invaders armed with automatic weapons. A neighbor called police, who exchanged gunfire with the perpetrators as they left the house. One suspect was wounded, but the other 3 escaped in a police vehicle.

Oct 09, 2005: A report published by the Buenos Aires Provincial Ministry of Security noted that San Isidro has one of the highest aggravated crime rates (homicides, robbery, burglary and sex crimes) in the province.

Oct 19, 2005, Martin Sturiza 555, Olivos, PBA: A 61 year old woman was found murdered in her apartment. Police are looking for a domestic servant.

Oct 26, 2005, 1130 hrs, Laprida 3399, Vicente Lopez, PBA: 3 armed men robbed the Banco Credicoop. The CCTV system was non-operational at the time of the robbery.

The suspects left behind a device that appeared to be a bomb, but which was later discovered to be a hoax.

Oct 31, 2005, 1100 hrs, Ruta Panamericana, Vicente Lopez: Highway robbers in several vehicles attempted to hijack a goods escorted by a security company. A truck driver and guard were injured in the shootout and a suspect was arrested.

Oct 31, 2005, Ruta Panamericana y Ruta 202: A women and her son were carjacked. Gendarmerie arrested the assailant after being called by a witness.

Nov 10, 2005, San Miguel, PBA: A folk religious leader was arrested for providing spiritual support and advice to the gang that kidnapped and murdered Axel Blumberg.

Nov 11, 2005, Isabel la Catolica 868, Lomas de San Isidro, PBA: A businessman was stabbed by 3 home invaders who stole money and jewelry from his safe. Neighbors called police, but there were no arrests.

Dec 4, 2005, Ezeiza International Airport: A Mission family member had a bag containing camera and electronic equipment stolen at the airport.

Dec 08, 2005: BA Provincial Police raided over 700 locations, including over 200 chop shops, arrested 498 suspects, and seized 122 weapons and 397 vehicles without proper documentation.

Dec 17, 2005, an Amcit visiting in-laws in Miramar was the victim of an armed home invasion. The owner of the house was beaten to reveal the location of valuables. Assailants appeared to be looking for money from a recent cattle sale.

Dec 20, 2005: the son of the Defense Attache was pick-pocketed at a mall.

Dec 22, 2005, Vicente Lopez, PBA: 2 suspects robbed a private courier and escaped with letters and bank documents.

Dec. 27, 2005, San Lorenzo 2800, Martinez, PBA: 2 elderly victims were robbed by 2 men, 2 women and 2 children who tricked the couple into believing that they were friends of their daughter.

B. OTHER SECURITY INCIDENTS:

Oct 01, 2005: 100-125 protesters demonstrated against

the visit of POTUS to Argentina for the Summit of the Americas, November 4-5. There were no incidents and no injuries. (Buenos Aires Spot Report 10-01-05)

Oct 04, 2005: At approximately 0710 local, the Argentine Federal Police received a telephonic bomb threat against the U.S. Embassy. Marines were reacted and the Chancery was cleared at 0850. (05 Buenos Aires 2479 and Spot Report 10-04-05)

Oct 05, 2005: 250 protesters calling themselves LA COMISION ANTIIMPERIALISTA DEL SUR demonstrated in Lomas De Zamora against the visit of POTUS to the Summit of the Americas. Protesters threw paint at several locations, including CITIBANK and BANKBOSTON branches, a McDonald's restaurant, offices of TELEFONICA, and the police. (05 Buenos Aires 2529 and Spot Report 10-06-05)

Oct 6, 2005: Several incendiary and arson attacks took

place in and around Buenos Aires targeting U.S. business interests including Citibank, BankBoston, Chevrolet, and Blockbuster. Additionally, flyers with the word AL QAEDA were found at several other locations including the SC Johnson plant in Podesta and a Walmart facility near Don Torcuato. (05 Buenos Aires 2529 and Spot Report 10-06-05)

Oct 12, 2005: 500-600 protesters demonstrated against the visit of POTUS to Argentina for the Summit of the Americas. Protesters used a truck-mounted sound system, drums, and fireworks. There were no incidents and no injuries. (Buenos Aires Sport Report 10-12-05)

Oct 19, 2005: At 0155 hrs, 2 small incendiary devices exploded outside the BankBoston branch at Calle 51 652, La Plata (capital of the Province of Buenos Aires). A third device was found and rendered safe. The explosion caused minor property damage and no injuries were reported. Pamphlets left at the scene were signed by the group FRENTE CHE GUEVARA and were directed against the visit of President Bush for the Summit of the Americas. (05 Buenos Aires 2664 and Spot Report 10-19-05)

Oct 26, 2005: Argentine Federal Police received a telephonic bomb threat against the U.S. Embassy. Police began a superficial sweep of the Embassy and EMR perimeters, but stopped since they considered the call to be a prank. LGF personnel checked the interior of the compound. There were no personnel in the Chancery except for MSG at Post 1. (05 Buenos Aires 2710 and Spot Report 10-26-05)

Oct 28, 2005: Approximately 250 protesters demonstrated against the visit of POTUS to Argentina for the Summit of the Americas. Protesters used a truck-mounted sound system, drums, and banners, and burned effigies. No injuries or incidents occurred. (05 Buenos Aires 2736 and Spot Report 10-28-05)

Nov 03, 2005, Cramer 2136, Belgrano: Students lit fireworks inside a local school in protest of President Bush's visit. 2 students were treated for smoke inhalation.

Nov 4, 2005: Approximately 75-100 protesters demonstrated against the visit of POTUS for the Summit of the Americas. Protestors used metal ladders to ram police barricades. Barricades separated and 2-3 protestors attempted to move through the opening before being pushed back by police. (05 Buenos Aires 2772 and Spot Report 11-04-05)

Nov 6, 2005: Manager of the U.S. Olympic Women's Field Hockey team notified ARSO of a bomb threat at the Club

Ciudad de Buenos Aires where the team was playing.
(Spot Report 11-07-05)

Dec 20, 2005, Plaza de Mayo, Congreso: Leftist groups protested in memory of their coworkers who died during the riots of 19 and 20 December riot in the Plaza de Mayo.

¶2. CONSTITUENT POSTS: None

¶3. (U) DS INITIATED INVESTIGATIONS:

NUMBER OF CASES GENERATED BY HEADQUARTERS OFFICES

	OPENED	CLOSED	PENDING	OVERDUE
¶1. PSS	(40)	(35)	(5)	(0)
¶2. VF	(0)	(0)	(3)	(0)
¶3. PF	(0)	(0)	(1)	(0)
¶4. CIL	(0)	(0)	(2)	(0)
¶5. PR	(0)	(0)	(1)	(0)
¶6. CI	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
¶7. PII	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)

V-2003-00252 (Cuban Smuggling)
V-2003-00172 (Consular Malfeasance)
V-2002-00244 (Attempted Fraud at AMEMB Kiev)
P-2003-02561 (Ecuadorian Child Smuggling)
CIL-19 CR20-082003-122-0023 (Fugitive QUESADA, Hugo)
CT08-0305-100-0452

NUMBER OF CASES GENERATED BY POST

	OPENED	CLOSED	PENDING	OVERDUE
¶1. FSN/PSC	(65)	(54)	(11)	(0)
¶2. Other Agency	(49)	(49)	(0)	
¶3. Host Gov't RFA	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)

¶4. (U) ACTION CABLES NOT ANSWERED BY DS:
BUENOS AIRES 447 AND 1503, Requests for ATA Needs Assessment (S/CT and DS action)
BUENOS AIRES 02246 Request for Replacement of Ambassador Follow Vehicle

¶5. (U) SUMMARY OF SEPARATE REPORTS:

A) CIWG REPORT:

Cable: BUENOS AIRES 1107, Technical Threat Level
Date: May 5, 2005

B) EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN:

Post: Buenos Aires
Date of Approved EAP: Mar 1, 2004, 04 STATE 45249
Updated: Dec. 2005

C) SECURITY SURVEYS:

Chancery - May 02 (next survey will be done on completion of project referred to at top of report)
Embassy Mission Residence - Jun 05
MSG Residence - Jun 05
DOA Animal Plant Health Inspection Office - Oct 01
DOA ARS Lab - Sep 02

D) PROCEDURAL SECURITY SURVEY:

Date: Classified E-mail to DS/IP/WHA Mar 16, 2004

E) COMPREHENSIVE SPE INVENTORY:

Cable: BUENOS AIRES 1180
Date: May 12, 2005

F) RSO QUARTERLY TRAVEL REPORT: n/a

G) ANNUAL CRIME EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE (ACEQ) AND OSAC CRIME SAFETY REPORT

Cable: This QSR
Date:

H) BUREAU OF DS OVERSEAS FIREARMS QUALIFICATION POLICY

RSO ISAAC: Cable: BUENOS AIRES 1322

- Date: May 27, 2005

I) SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE (SEPQ)

Cable: BUENOS AIRES 2373

Date: Sep 21, 2005

16. (SBU) OSAC Overseas Country Council Status Report

Key Events and Significant Activities

Issues and Concerns

- Attacks against American entities prior to and during the Summit of the Americas. Members are

concerned by the government's continuing policy of non-intervention against vandals and demonstrators.

Outlook

- January is the traditional holiday month and meetings will resume in February 2006.

16. (U) ANNUAL CRIME EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE (ACEQ):

11. (U) CRIME MOBILITY:

(F) Gangs and other criminal elements roam freely day or night, and target Emboff and affluent residential areas for burglaries and crimes of violence against residents.

DISCUSSION: The Chancery, EMR, DCR, and Mission apartments are located in the Recoleta-Palermo-Belgrano neighborhoods of the City of Buenos Aires. Houses are located in the Vicente Lopez, Olivos, La Lucila, Martinez, and Acassuso neighborhoods, in the Municipalities of Vicente Lopez and San Isidro (also known as Zona Norte) in the Province of Buenos Aires.

Well-developed road and public transportation systems make affluent neighborhoods easy to access, and cars and motorcycles are readily available. Gangs often operate out of the numerous slums, known as villas, located throughout the metro area, including downtown and adjacent to Embassy housing neighborhoods. Police are sometimes reluctant to enter these villas except during large-scale raids.

During 2005, there were muggings, attempted muggings, vehicle thefts and break-ins, home invasions, restaurant raids, grocery store raids, and bank robberies in the Recoleta/Palermo/Belgrano areas downtown. The beginning of 2005 saw a continuation of apartment and office building burglaries and invasions in Palermo and Belgrano neighborhoods. In the Zona Norte suburbs (Embassy houses), burglaries, home invasions, and other armed robberies continued to be common. Zona Norte is also considered the center of kidnapping activity.

12. (U) CRIME AMBIANCE (Emboff neighborhoods are):

(C) Within walking distance (approx one mile) of high crime areas, which are perceived as unsafe because street crime and residential crimes are common day and night.

DISCUSSION: Recoleta, Palermo and Belgrano are known for muggings, vehicle and apartment break-ins, bank/business/restaurant raids, pick pocketing, and street scams. While these are affluent areas, they are bounded by poorer neighborhoods, including vQas (slums) such as the notorious Villa Cava. They are also transient areas, crisscrossed by major thoroughfares. The large park areas of Recoleta and Palermo are notoriously unsafe after dark. While much

of Belgrano is still respectable, parts of it have declined due to the economy.

Police attribute many of the crimes that occur in the Zona Norte house neighborhood to residents of the adjacent slums. Zona Norte is considered a special case due to the extremes of wealth and poverty present in the same area. The Embassy neighborhoods are the most lucrative and suffer accordingly.

13. (U) AGGRESSIVENESS OF CRIMINALS (Criminal perpetrators usually):

(D) Do not avoid and may seek violent confrontation with occupants during burglaries, and are not deterred by police response to alarm or emergency phone call.

DISCUSSION: Victims of home and business invasions are threatened and beaten until they reveal the location of their valuables. Businesses are often robbed during working hours when cash and valuables are more likely to be on hand. Bank and armored car robberies frequently result in shootouts. Shootouts with police or security guards daily, and a policeman is killed weekly as a result of criminal activity. Hostage situations occur in varying degrees several times a week, in Greater Buenos Aires. The only criminals that normally do not engage in violence are the street scam artists that prey on tourists. Even pickpockets will pull knives if confronted by a victim.

14. (U) ARMING OF CRIMINALS (Criminal perpetrators usually are):

(C) Carrying firearms (handguns or shoulder weapons).

DISCUSSION: Guns are readily available and any criminal willing to confront a victim is armed. Handguns are most commonly used, but sub machineguns and military rifles (available for sale or rent) are also used. Police raids often recover grenades and explosives in addition to pistols, rifles, and automatic weapons. Criminals also use real and simulated explosives to threaten people and cover their escape (approximately one-third of Federal bomb squad calls in the city of Buenos Aires).

Also see answer to number 3 above.

15. (U) AGGREGATION OF CRIMINALS (Criminal perpetrators usually):

(C) Operate in groups of two or four individuals, are disposed occasionally to be confrontational and gratuitously violent.

DISCUSSION: Official police reporting, news stories and anecdotal evidence indicate that criminals Qmost always operate in groups, with two to five being the average size. Larger groups have been used in robberies of banks, warehouses or large stores. In periods of civil unrest, mobs of dozens to two or three hundred people have looted grocery stores and warehouses. Children, with adult backup, are used to confront other children and are used by gangs to commit many crimes due to the lenient juvenile laws. Victims are beaten if they hesitate to hand over valuables or have too little to steal. Victims are often shot or stabbed if they offer resistance.

16. (SBU) DETERRENCE/RESPONSE OF POLICE:

NOTE: Separate responses for Capital Federal (Embassy apartments) and Province (Embassy houses).

CAPITAL FEDERAL (PFA):

(C) Local police or neighborhood associations are generally ineffective at deterring crime and response to alarms or emergency calls are often too slow (15 minutes or longer) to disrupt burglaries or invasive crimes in progress in Emboff neighborhoods; police have a mediocre record in apprehending suspects after the fact.

DISCUSSION: Despite reorganization, a large percentage

of Federal Police resources are devoted to public order, internal security, and administrative functions, leaving fewer resources to patrol the streets and fight crime. This is a result of both actual taskings (demonstration activity) and institutional attitudes. The redeployment of policemen away from banks and back to street corners is believed to have contributed to an increase in bank robberies (along with more cash in circulation). Checkpoints are a favorite, but ineffective, crime fighting tactic. Follow-up investigations are limited due to lack of resources and an overwhelming number of complaints. Both Federal and Provincial Police are often unmotivated to pursue criminals due to a dysfunctional judicial system that operates in slow motion and sets many offenders free (including repeat offenders).

PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES (BONAERENSE):

(D) Local police or neighborhood associations are totally ineffective in deterring or disrupting burglaries and other crimes in Emboff neighborhoods, and seldom are able to apprehend or arrest suspects after the fact.

DISCUSSION: Records for the municipalities where Embassy houses are located show an increase in reported crime for 2005. The Province of Buenos Aires is larger than many European countries and has a population of over 10 million, but a police force of barely 45,000. Despite several attempts at reorganization, a large percentage of provincial policemen are still assigned to administrative or guard duties. Checkpoints continue to be a favorite, but ineffective, crime fighting tactic. Despite purges and internal investigations, it is still widely believed that policemen are involved in much of the criminal activity, which discourages people from reporting crimes or providing information, further reducing the effectiveness of the police.

17. (SBU) TRAINING/PROFESSIONALISM OF POLICE:

CAPITAL FEDERAL (PFA):

(B) Police are generally professional, reasonably well-trained, but may have resource/manpower limitations that inhibit their deterrence or response effectiveness.

DISCUSSION: The PFA is reasonably competent and organized but suffers from low funding, overwork, weak leadership, and corruption. Working conditions are difficult and dangerous. Police are often less assertive than necessary due to the lack of clear policy guidance and political support from the federal government. Serious intra-mural rivalries and resulting lack of coordination within the force are continuing problems. Corruption purges in the last two years, with and without cause, damaged morale.

PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES (BONAERENSE):

(D) Police are somewhat unprofessional and ill trained; they are demonstrably apathetic to alarms and investigation of incidents in Emboff neighborhoods; they have serious resource/manpower limitations that inhibit their deterrence or response effectiveness.

DISCUSSION: The BA Provincial Police are in the midst of a reorganization, which will take time to produce benefits. The current force comes from a system based totally on seniority with virtually no professional development after basic training. Provincial Police have even fewer resources, lower pay, and more

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dangerous working conditions than their federal counterparts. The Provincial Police continue to suffer from purges and from frequent turnover in senior professional and political management. Serious intra-mural rivalries and resulting lack of coordination within the force are continuing problems. Corruption is a major problem.

17. OSAC CRIME SAFETY REPORT:

1. OVERALL CRIME AND SAFETY:

The primary threat to life and limb in Argentina, especially Buenos Aires, is a traffic accident. The use of seatbelts is mandatory.

Crime is a serious problem in Argentina, but one that can be managed with common sense precautions. Criminal activity is concentrated in the urban areas, especially Greater Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Rosario, and Mendoza. The wealthier parts of metro Buenos Aires experience high rates of property crime, with high-income neighborhoods often registering twice as many complaints as some of the poorer and supposedly more dangerous parts of town. In the countryside, there have been a few tourists robbed in isolated areas and occasional burglaries of hotel rooms in resort areas. Highway robbery largely affects commercial vehicles and hijacking of inter-city buses is uncommon.

Urban crime includes: pick pocketing / purse snatching, scams, mugging, express kidnapping, residential burglary, home invasion, thefts from vehicles (smash and grab), car theft and carjacking. Short-term visitors to urban areas are subject to all types of street crime, but report few problems with public transportation or with four and five star hotels. Long-term residents are subject to the full range of criminal activity on the street, while driving, and at home.

Express kidnapping (short duration / low ransom) continues along with conventional mugging. Extortion kidnapping for ransom has so far only affected well-off Argentines. The true rate of kidnapping is unknown, but probably lower than in Brazil, Colombia, or Mexico. Virtual kidnapping, a telephone scam in which the caller claims to have kidnapped someone who is simply not at home, continues to be rampant. Such calls often come from jails and the callers ask for prepaid phone cards, which are a form of money inside prisons.

Most criminals are armed and ready to shoot at the first sign of resistance. In Buenos Aires policemen are killed every week. Crimes occur at all hours and armed robberies often take place during business hours. Favorite targets for armed robberies are banks and businesses dealing in cash or high-value merchandise. Apartment invasions and burglaries are common, and occasionally entire buildings are taken over. Criminals often go through neighborhoods and apartment buildings ringing doorbells and robbing those who open the door.

Argentina is still considered a transit country for drugs, but local consumption is increasing.

II. POLITICAL VIOLENCE:

There are daily demonstrations in Greater Buenos Aires and frequent demonstrations in other major cities. Most protests are related to domestic economic and

political issues. U.S. interests are targeted based on current events, such as the war in Iraq, IMF negotiations, economic policy, or policy toward Cuba. The largest and most disruptive protests are usually sponsored by the "piqueteros" (a collection of groups whose main tactic is to block the road). In Buenos Aires, demonstrations most commonly occur downtown and often end up at the Plaza de Mayo, Casa Rosada, Congress, or the obelisk on 9 de Julio. Protesters generally come from labor unions, unemployed/underemployed/landless movements, student groups, and communists. While most protests are peaceful, there are hooligan elements that periodically show up to fight the police and engage in vandalism. The Police are generally restrained unless attacked by hooligans. In addition to the organized demonstrations, there are frequent, spontaneous protests by groups of displaced workers, bank depositors, unpaid pensioners, etc.

Despite the poor perception of various USG policies, Argentines are friendly to Americans and visitors are unlikely to experience any anti-American sentiment.

In recent years, there have been periodic pipe bomb or incendiary attacks. During the past year, typical targets have been bank branches, municipal or public utility offices, McDonald's restaurants, and Blockbuster Video stores. These incidents usually occur in the middle of the night and appear intended to cause only property damage. A string of such attacks occurred shortly before the November 2005 Summit of the Americas to protest the visit of President Bush.

There is no known operational terrorist activity in Argentina, but the 1994 AMIA bombing and the tri-border area generate considerable interest. The tri-border area is considered porous, but the known activity consists of fund raising and money laundering on the other sides of the border.

III. POST-SPECIFIC CONCERNS:

Argentina experiences occasional flooding along the coast, including parts of Buenos Aires, and in low-lying parts of the interior, such as Santa Fe Province. Western/northwestern provinces, such as Mendoza, Salta, Jujuy, and Tucuman suffer from periodic earthquakes.

Road conditions are good, but traffic is fast throughout the country and heavy in the big cities. Drivers are aggressive and the accident rate involving pedestrians is very high.

IV. POLICE RESPONSE:

Expatriates can generally expect better response and less harassment than in many other Latin American countries. Individuals detained by the police should ask to contact their Embassy or consulate.

Checkpoints are common, especially around Buenos Aires, and drivers must have all documentation, including passport or Argentine ID card, driving license, vehicle registration and proof of third-party liability insurance.

POLICE EMERGENCY NUMBERS:

CAPITAL FEDERAL POLICE: 101 or 4383-1111 through 1119

Fire: 100 or 4951-2222, 4381-2222, 4383-2222

BUENOS AIRES PROVINCIAL POLICE (suburbs): 9-1-1

IV. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

CAPITAL FEDERAL (City of Buenos Aires):

SAME: 107 or 4923-1051/9
(Municipal Emergency Medical Service)

HOSPITAL	ADDRESS	PHONE
Hospital Fernandez	Cervino 3356	4808-2600
Hospital Aleman	Pueyrredon 1640	4821-1700
Sanatorio Trinidad	Cervino 4720	4127-5555

BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE (suburbs):

HOSPITAL	ADDRESS	PHONE
San Isidro	JJ Diaz 818, San Isidro	4512-3700
San Lucas	Belgrano 369, San Isidro	4732-8888
Sanatorio Trinidad	Fleming 590, San Isidro	4793-6766

VI. SECURITY TIPS:

CARRY CASH: 100-200 US\$ or 300-400 pesos. The people most likely to be beaten are those without enough worth stealing. If confronted, offer no resistance and immediately hand over everything demanded.

NO ROLEXES.

Stay in the well lit, populated areas. Avoid parks after dark. Be alert to pick pocketing in tourist and shopping areas.

Do not flash large amounts of cash, or carry expensive looking bags, briefcases, or laptop cases in public.

Do not carry all of your important documents in your wallet or purse. Carry a photocopy of your passport.

Use ATM machines located in public places like the hotel, shopping mall, or event venue. If the booth has a door, make sure it closes behind you.

If you are in a restaurant or other business that gets robbed, follow the instructions of the robbers and hand over valuables on demand.

MUSTARD ON THE BACK SCAM: Unknown to you, a liquid is squirted on your back. After a few steps, someone, often a middle-aged woman, will inform you that you have something on your back and offer to help clean it off. Meanwhile, she picks your pockets. This scam is common in tourist areas such as San Telmo, La Boca, 9 de Julio, Recoleta, and Florida Street. Fortunately, this is one of the least confrontational crimes, just say "NO" and walk away.

Pay with exact change as much as possible. If you pay for a small item with a large bill, you risk being shortchanged or getting counterfeit in change. Only take pesos as change.

Use credit cards only at the hotel and major stores and restaurants. Watch your bills carefully for fraudulent charges.

TRANSPORTATION

Remises (hired car and driver) are the best public transportation. They charge by the kilometer and are

reasonably priced. Hotels, many restaurants, and shopping centers can call one from an established service.

Radio taxis are also OK. Taxis are black and yellow in the Capital, and white with blue lettering in the Province.

Avoid black and yellow taxis with the word MANDATARIA on the door, and do not take rides offered by people on the street or outside an airport.

In order of preference: a) Call for a taxi, b) take one from an established stand, c) hail one on the street (but not in front of a bank).

USE the seatbelts, lock the doors, and keep windows up.

Subways, buses, and trains are safe but watch out for pickpockets and be ready for work stoppages.

Watch your bags at airports, bus, and ship terminals.

DEMONSTRATIONS

Demonstrations are a daily occurrence in Buenos Aires and other large cities and towns.

In Buenos Aires, demonstrations often occur in the downtown plazas, and near commercial and government buildings. Roadblocks (pickets) on major roads leading into the larger cities are also common.

Protests range in size from dozens to thousands of participants.

Most protests are peaceful, but may be loud due to sound systems, drums, and fireworks. The burning of effigies and flags is routine.

There are hooligan groups that will sometimes infiltrate protests in order to fight the police and engage in vandalism.

At soccer games, sit in the expensive seats and do not wear the colors of, or cheer for, the visiting team.

VII: FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Buenos Aires OSAC meets the second Tuesday of every month, February through December, at 1000 at the U.S. Embassy in downtown Buenos Aires. The Regional Security Office can provide more information.

AMERICAN EMBASSY: (54)(11) 5777-4533
Regional Security Office 5777-4298
Marine Post 1 (24 hrs) 5777-4873